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SECOND WESSEX

THE UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHAMPTON

JANUARY, 1960

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EDITORIAL

AT A POORLY ATTENDED UNION MEETING at the end of last session Rag officially passed away. It was not a sudden death, and, in fact, had been taking place for some time. It would appear that the University Rag is now unpopular with the public and the police, but is still regarded as an entity in its own right, and as a symbol of University tradition, by a large proportion of students.

A survey conducted last term indicated that eighty per cent. of the Union wished to see Rag re-instated, but an incredibly small proportion of the so-called supporters of Rag attended the meeting to show their disapproval of the motion demanding its abolition. We suggest that this is typical of the student's attitude towards Union affairs, whether or not something of an accepted importance is being discussed, and that it is the most obvious recent example of that criticism made most frequently of the student in this Union—apathy.

What does the University Rag represent? Has it a logical place in the modern University, or is it an imitation of a tradition fostered by the older University? To the minority Rag is a positive opportunity to raise money for charity, but to the overwhelming majority Rag is an occasion for the loosing of those high spirits kept so carefully under control during the remainder of the session. We contend that, in this respect, the abolition of Rag is justified. Further to this, the Rag in a traditional concept, does not belong in a University lacking an appropriate traditional and cultural atmosphere.

It is this same majority that is opposed to the recent attempts to introduce an Arts Festival in place of Rag. Admittedly, at the present time, facilities for holding an Arts Festival are not adequate, but its establishment could well encourage a growing trend of thought, and the physical limitations do not warrant a rejection of this plan. An Arts Festival would be more representative of an academic way of life than Rag: and sixteen hundred people purporting to have a reasonably high standard of intelligence should be able to produce something worthy of their position in society.

It should be questioned whether there is such an average standard in this University, or whether its members merely choose to conceal it. The lack of contributions to this edition of "Second Wessex" points to a confirmation of the former, but we are willing to believe that the solution lies with the latter.

In this first edition of this session we are attempting to promote some thought which will justify the publication of the second edition.

THE EDITORS, January, 1960.

IN THE SHADOW OF THE VALLEY OF LIFE :

THE SUN is setting behind the distant hills across the valley,

The shadows are long, and are distorted images of the parent shape,
The far horizon's clouds are red, tinged with the blood of the dying day.
The green fields darken as the sun descends, but soon the moon will rise
to show nocturnal travellers the way.

Now see the blood-red moon arise, part veiled by cloud;
Now feel the warm rain on your face and outspread arms,
Now see the spirits of your past drift by, enfurled in shrouds,
And feel the saline tears upon your cheeks, and cry and cry until your
weeping ends in death.

But sweet escape through death is not to be the way for me.
No! Death in life shall be the punishment that fate metes out,
And mortal death shall, when it comes, be a most welcome visitor,
For then oblivion shall be mine, and I may rest untroubled with no
remembrance of the loneliness.

A. M. BENSON.

UNIVERSITIES ARE NOW AT A CRITICAL POINT. Their

whole character is changing and in particular their rapid increase in size and the changing emphasis as between science and the arts are creating problems which, while much discussed, are not calling forth very much in the way of positive action. Furthermore, those who are doing the talking are mainly members of academic or administrative staff, civil servants or politicians. It is time a carefully considered and thoroughly worked out attitude was adopted by students.

In thinking about this problem we must not be afraid to make very radical changes; we must be careful to clear away all pre-conceived notions and to start again from first principles. For a start, what are the purposes of a University?

First of all, I suggest, we come to University to increase our general knowledge, sharpen and broaden our intellects and to learn how to attack the sort of problems with which we will be presented. Here our university education should give us a general grasp of the broad field with which we are concerned so that we are in a position to really attack a specialised aspect of it; our reasoning power should be developed; a degree should be an indication of a certain guaranteed standard of intelligence.

Secondly, a degree should involve the teaching of techniques of analysis whether of literary criticism, economic analysis or scientific method, formulæ and facts. This is, of course, true of all students but perhaps especially of scientists. A high proportion of arts and economics students on graduation go to a firm for further training. When a firm engages such a graduate they are interested in the fact that he or she has achieved a certain intellectual standard, not that he, or she, understand indifference curves, or appreciates Baudelaire. A firm employing a science graduate is interested—not exclusively—but interested, in his knowledge of the techniques involved. The second purpose of university education is, therefore, the acquisition of techniques.

Thirdly, there are the social, cultural and athletic facilities and opportunities provided by the Union, the Athletic Union and the many societies, religious, political, social and cultural.

Fourthly, there is research. Many academics feel that a university is more a place for research than a place for teaching and so, whether one agrees with that or not, it is clearly a very important aspect of the objects of university life.

Now the question arises as to whether modern universities are achieving their purposes and if not why not. I think in general that the "Acquisition of techniques" angle is in general as satisfactory as can be expected but too often this is achieved parrot-fashion and without the sharpened intellect and powers of reason which should be there as well. In this way many people get good degrees but these are no longer a guarantee of real intellectual ability, nor do such people often know sufficient about subjects and disciplines other than their own. This is true on all sides, the majority of arts graduates have no conception of scientific method, the majority of engineers and scientists are far too

narrow in their knowledge and all too often, the economists are on a private limb knowing nothing of either arts or science.

The next great "lack" is cultural. When was the last time a really top-flight musician was heard in this university. What proportion of students are really interested in the arts? The position is very bad; but its no use just admitting that; something must be done about it.

The low level of intellect can I think be attributed to a number of things, and I want to make it quite clear that I refer not to this university in particular but to universities in general. As a matter of fact I think Southampton is probably better off than most—certainly this is true of my own department. Nevertheless, meeting people from other universities, talking with them and comparing what one hears with one's own experience one can form some general opinions. First, the lecturing is not of a high enough standard. This I think stems from a confusion as to whether lecturers are appointed to teach or do research. They are chosen almost entirely with reference to their academic qualifications and the number of learned articles they have published. Lecturing ability is apparently scarcely considered. The result is that while students pick up facts their interest is not stimulated. Secondly, and this applies particularly to scientists and engineers, the programme of lectures and practicals is too heavy, allowing too little time to develop wider interests.

Turning now to the question of research a distinction should I think be drawn between research undertaken with the primary view of making a contribution to knowledge and that undertaken as a training. The former applies to quite a lot, perhaps the bulk of the research in Science and Engineering Faculties and also that of the academic staff in Arts and Economics Faculties but we have to face the fact that the prime purpose of research by students in these last two faculties is often the improving and sharpening of the minds of the students concerned. This is important as I shall show shortly.

Now what is to be done?? First of all there is the problem of improving the general intellectual standard and providing a broader education for all. These two points are allied. If, as I have suggested, many people who get Bachelors degrees are not of the intellectual level to deserve them the best thing is to alter the Bachelor degree to suit that. I suggest that there should be a set of much broader and less specialist two-year courses for which one would get a B.A. (or a B.Sc.) and which would be taken by a very large portion of the community. This would mean that industry and employers in general had some guarantee of standard—a criterion by which to judge applicants—which would have a closer relation to reality. Further this should be more effective, from the point of view of giving a wider education, than Keele's one year of general study or our own open-lectures for freshers, which are a step in the right direction but insufficient.

After completion of a Bachelor's degree many more than at present would stay on a further two years to do a Master's degree which would not be a research degree but just a specialist honours degree of a rather higher standard than the present Bachelors degrees. This would bring

the system more into line with that existing in America and incidentally would provide a closer resemblance to Oxford and Cambridge "bought" M.A.'s.

The next point is that I think we must recognise that universities have become primarily teaching establishments, and we must therefore appoint a much higher proportion of academic staff with greater regard to lecturing ability. So far as research is concerned a distinction should be drawn between those who are doing research training and those who are really making valuable contributions to knowledge. The former, as far as possible should be encouraged to work in non-university establishments—government and industrial research stations for example. This would apply mainly to scientists, engineers and some economists and statisticians. The university would be reserved as far as possible for *teaching* but those doing research in other establishments would be enabled to obtain research degrees for their work if they so wished.

The result of all this would be that universities would consist of large numbers of students doing two-year general degree courses—including both arts and science subjects. A smaller proportion but none the less a significant number would be doing the new type of Masters degree (perhaps a quarter of those who got Bachelors degrees). There would be a number of research students as at present but some of those in science and engineering faculties would work in other establishments if practicable. The main function of academic staff particularly on the science side would be teaching.

There is still the dearth of culture to be remedied. Here I have three suggestions. First an effort should be made to see that some of those who now have very heavy timetables should be given more leisure (this by the way is N.U.S. policy). Second, the university should give direct grants to cultural societies to ensure that they can bring down top rate musicians, writers, artists, etc., and third, the university should appoint a cultural officer to help these societies to obtain good speakers and performers and to generally encourage cultural activities.

I know that I have uttered some heresies—particularly about research—but the important thing is to start considering some radical solutions for the many problems that are arising. I think some of the above ideas may be impracticable but I believe that these are the sort of lines on which we must think.

P. V. HILLS.

BEFORE ONE CAN SAY ANYTHING at all about Christianity I think it is necessary to first know what one means by the word "Christian." Its use today is very loose and very wide. Many people assume a Christian is someone who attempts to lead a good life. We can dispense with that I feel because it infers that all the people who are not Christians, all the Buddhists, Mohammedans, etc., are not trying to live a good life. In the day of St. Augustine and St. Thomas Aquinas when someone said he was a Christian he meant he accepted a whole collection of creeds which were set out with great precision, and every single syllable of those creeds he believed with the whole strength of his conviction.

Nowadays, of course, it is not quite that. To be a Christian today one must believe at least both in God and in immortality. Then, of course, as the name implies you must have certain beliefs about Christ. If you do not hold that Christ was divine, he must at least be the best and wisest of men.

Now it is necessary to tell you why I reject a belief in God and in immortality, and why I do not think that Christ was the best and wisest of men.

The simplest and easiest argument to start with is, of course, the First Cause argument. Man thinks in terms of time and space, of cause and effect. Why must we demand from a religion that it explain the Universe completely in these terms and present the Universe to us as a manufactured article and the private property of the Manufacturer? We were told to pity the delusion of infidels who held that the world was supported by a tortoise that was supported by an elephant. Simply ask them what the elephant stood on? The same question applies today. The Universe exists: somebody must have created it. If that somebody exists somebody must have created him. This is a logical dilemma that no amount of reasoning can get behind. It is as easy for me to believe that the Universe made itself as that a maker of the Universe made himself: in fact, much easier since the Universe exists and makes itself day by day before me, whereas a maker of it is a hypothesis. In other words, if everything must have a cause then God must have a cause. If there can be anything without a cause it may just as well be the Universe as God.

There is, of course, the further argument, that of design. This is, that everything in the world is made just so that we can manage to live on it. This, of course, is just not so. Darwin has conclusively scoffed the argument of design. He has proved that it is not the environment that is made suitable for living creatures, but that they grew to be suitable to it, and that is the basis of adaption. There is no evidence of design about it.

When one looks seriously at the argument of design, it is a most astonishing thing that people can believe that this world should be the best that omnipotence and omniscience has been able to produce in millions of years, bearing in mind all its defects. I wonder, if I were granted omnipotence and omniscience plus millions of years in which to

perfect my world, I could produce nothing better than the Klu-Klux-Klan or the Fascists. Moreover, ordinary laws of science tell us that human life and life itself will in due course die out on this planet. Apparently it is a stage in the decay of the solar system. At a certain stage in that decay conditions are suitable to protoplasm and there is life for a short time in the life of the whole solar system. The moon, we are told, is the sort of thing to which the earth is tending—dead, cold and lifeless. I am told also that this is a much too depressing a thought: but that is nonsense, for no-one really worries about what is going to happen millions of years hence.

There is a very curious moral argument for the existence of a God. He is, presumably, required in order that there be justice in the world. On this earth, this tiny part of the Universe that we know, there is a great deal of injustice. Often the good suffer and the wicked prosper. Therefore, if one is to believe that the good will win, that there is justice in the Universe as a whole, then one must assume an after-life in order to redress the balance of life here on earth. There must be a God, and a Heaven and a Hell, so that in the long run there will be justice. This is indeed strange. If somebody delivered to me a crate of oranges and when I took the lid off I discovered that the entire top layer was mouldy and bad, I do not think for one moment I should assume that those underneath will be alright so as to redress the balance. I should probably, and I think reasonably, assume that I had received a bad consignment. This is surely how a reasonable and sensible man would think when he applies it to the world. The part of the Universe that we know is full of justice and injustice, full of good and bad. There is absolutely nothing to make us assume that anywhere else is any different, the part that is here is a reasonable example of anywhere else.

I am aware that intellectual arguments do not move people. What really moves people to believe in God is not in any way intellectual. Most people do so because they have been taught from early infancy to do so: that is the main reason. The next powerful reason is the wish for safety, a sort of feeling that there is a big brother who will look after you. The fact that this big brother may be, as Shelley said, "an Almighty Fiend" does not seem to bother many people; although many gnostics have taken up the line that I often feel is a very plausible one—simply that as a matter of fact the world was made by the devil one moment when God was not looking. There is a good deal to be said for that and I am not concerned here to refute it.

Today, belief in immortality does not depend on evidence any more than a belief in the Deity, fear would seem to be the most persuasive impulse. What exactly orthodoxy means by a resurrection I have often tried to understand. Those who claim to believe in resurrection of the body, seldom, when pressed, seriously hold that our physical bodies will be raised from decomposed matter, and a spiritual body always seems to me to be a contradiction in terms. Spirit is not matter. The desire not to be snuffed out like a candle after three score years and ten, and to rejoin one's friends in another life is strong and natural. Yet I ask

myself whether I really wish to spend an eternity in any surroundings. When I enquire of others who profess a belief in immortality I am afraid I am forced to the conclusion that their faith is a comforting assumption and not a practical confidence such as they have that the 9.20 from Southampton Central will take them to Waterloo. If they really believed in the next world in this everyday sense would it not affect their thoughts and their conduct in this world? "Resist not evil, but whosoever shall smite thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also." This was not a new principle, it was used some five or six hundred years before Christ by Lao-Tze and Buddha, it is not, however, a principle which Christians accept. I have no doubt that the present Prime Minister, for instance, is a most sincere Christian (as he understands it), but I should not advise any of you to go and smite him on one cheek. I think you will find that he thinks this text was intended figuratively. This, of course, is what every Christian does when he cannot accept one of the recorded sayings. Many of such maxims are in essence very excellent, although I admit, a little difficult to live up to. I do not profess to do so myself, but then after all, it is not quite the same thing as for a Christian who believes (he says) in immortality.

The belief in immortality leads us I think to a rather amusing state of affairs, when the necessity for killing a dangerous human arises, as it apparently does almost daily we provide the man very quaintly with a minister of religion to explain to him that we are not killing him at all, but only expediting his transfer to an eternity of bliss. Presumably the man goes to Heaven, otherwise he is punished twice, which hardly seems just.

I come now to certain points which I do not believe that one can grant either the superlative wisdom or the superlative goodness of Christ as depicted in the Gospels. If one reads the Gospels with one's brains and not one's emotions it will be realised that Jesus believed in an early second coming, before in fact the death of some of his disciples. For instance, "There are some standing here which shall not taste death till the Son of Man comes into His Kingdom." He was obviously wrong in this respect. As a matter of interest I know some Christians who still believe that this coming is imminent. A girl-friend of mine was frightened to the point of tears one day when she was told and convinced of this by someone: however, she was much consoled when she saw this same person the next day planting trees and flowers in his garden.

One very great defect in Christ's moral character, in my view, was that he believed in Hell. I do not feel myself that any person who is really profoundly humane can believe in everlasting punishment. Christ certainly did, and to people who did not like His teaching He said, "Ye serpents, ye generation of vipers, how can you escape the damnation of hell?" I do not really think that anyone who was superlatively good and kind and merciful would have put fears and terrors of that sort into the world.

There are other examples equally important. There is the curious story of the fig tree. One day Jesus sees a fig tree, and presumably, is

hungry. Anyway He finds on the tree nothing but leaves since figs were out of season. In His anger He turns to it and says, "No man eat fruit of thee hereafter forever." Peter then comments, "Master, behold the fig tree thou cursedst is withered away." This is incredible I think. Surely one cannot blame a fig tree because it doesn't happen to be the right time of year for figs. Again, the instance of the Gadarene swine, where it was certainly not very kindly to the pigs to put the devils into them and make them rush down the hill to the sea. One must remember that He was omnipotent, and could have simply made the devils go away, instead He chose to put them into the pigs.

There was a time, of course, when there existed a general belief that humans have immortal souls, and brutes none. This, presumably, justified Jesus' action. Nowadays, however, more and more people are refusing to make this distinction.

I have hardly said enough on this subject but there is a limit to the amount that can be written. This briefly then, is why I do not accept Jesus as others do. However, I liked Jesus most of the time, but I liked the one who did not rise from the dead for this is how a sacrifice should really be. The Priests, though, have reduced my Jesus to a stupid miracle that they do not really believe. They are thieves.

Religion is based, I think, on fear. Fear of the unknown, and as I have said the desire to have a kind of elder brother to look after you during times of distress. Fear is the basis of the whole thing. Science can help us to get over this craven fear in which mankind has lived for so many generations. Science can teach us, indeed our own hearts can teach us, no longer to look around for imaginary supports, no longer to invent allies in the sky, but rather to look to our own efforts here below and make this world a fit place to live in, instead of the sort of place the Churches in these centuries have made it. We must stand on our own two feet and look the world fairly and squarely in the face—its good facts, its bad facts, its beauty, its ugliness—see it as it is, and not be afraid of it. Conquer it by intelligence. Even if the open windows of science at first make us shiver after the cosy indoor warmth of a traditional humanizing myth, in the end the fresh air brings vigour, and the great spaces have a splendour of their own.

R.V.B.

ELEGY

DROP through the deep earth

Lie down and die—

There's no-one will notice.

They'll bury you holy

Mumble the hollow words

And laugh over cocktails.

No bloody angels

Hallelujahs and harp-strings

Just the rain in the grave-yard.

You've had your fun, brother

Now it's the worms' turn

Lie and rot for eternity.

R.H.

CARL NEILSEN—THE SOCIOLOGIST OF MUSIC

CARL NEILSEN has been rather unduly overshadowed by his Finnish contemporary Sibelius in this country and the U.S.A., and although in age they were similar, this is where any resemblance between them ended. For Nielsen had his own idiomatic style entirely different from any of his contemporaries, Scandinavian or otherwise. His six symphonies give an outline of his career, and his progressive development may be seen in the first five symphonies. His style is full of "Fingerprints," rhythmic, melodic, contrapuntal, harmonic and tonal. And points to be noted is his use of the flattened seventh (the influence of folk music), swinging triple time and the original use of major and minor thirds. However, his music is never restricted to a stylized affectation, and as he matures, his mastery of tonality becomes more evident.

Already in his first symphony his boldness is apparent and his handling of keys is new, and in the third, fourth, and fifth symphonies this principle is expressed with remarkable subtlety, force and depth. As with most other composers it is possible to divide Nielsen's career into periods: the first ends with his opera *Saul and David* and Symphony Number 2 (*The Four Temperaments*) about 1902; the second period culminates with Symphony Number 3 (*Sinfonia Espansiva*) in 1911; the third period opened with Sonata Number 2 for Viola and Piano and the main works between 1910 and 1922 show

a new quality of steely determination whose climax is in the overwhelmingly powerful Fifth Symphony, perhaps the highest of all his attainments; the fourth and last period includes the Sixth Symphony and the splendid "Commotio" for organ. This period is a transitional one and can in no way be considered a philosophical summing up in the sense that Sibelius's Seventh Symphony or Beethoven's last quartets present themselves.

But his true greatness is reflected in his symphonies and to them we must turn and analyse. In his First Symphony which was written in 1892, his debt to Brahms is obvious, yet his own personality is expressed in it from start to finish. In this symphony, it is the first which ends in a key different from that in which it began. In this respect he is far bolder than Sibelius, whose First Symphony was written seven years later, and was obviously based on familiar Tchaikovskian lines. This First Symphony shows that Nielsen was already clear to his path as a composer, for it displays the principle of "progressive" tonality, which is the systematic evolution of one tonality out of another. At this time, it should be noted that Nielsen was not much interested in the Straussian concept of programme music, but this is not to say that he thought music any more than any other part of life, "absolute." His outlook was the objective search of life and his music illustrates this quest.

As the First Symphony is the expression of personal strength and ability, so the second strikes out on what was to be a life-long task, the study of human character. This symphony is sub-titled *The Four Temperaments*, because Nielsen was given his inspiration for the work by a series of paintings of the same name. It shows him looking outward at other people, understanding more about himself through them. And the construction is correspondently subtler and more original. We now come to the time before the First World War, in which Nielsen was in his happiest (philosophically) period, and his Third Symphony (*Sinfonia Espansiva*) is indicative of this spirit. Often people have said that the Dane, Nielsen is a happy composer and the Finn, Sibelius is grim, but this is an oversimplified statement of both musicians' attitudes. However, at this period of Nielsen's career his approach was more relaxed and his foreboding about the society he lived in, came later. This symphony could be considered Nielsen's "pastoral," because it does conjure up the Danish country-side and its people, yet it is more an expression of geniality with the world.

With the outbreak of the First World War Nielsen was much affected by the sight of so much strife and his music undergoes a change which is first noticeable in his Fourth Symphony. As the Third symphony was held together by an overall tonal structure, so this work takes the next step by being actually continuous. There are four distinct movements, but they are inter-linked and none is in any sense self sufficient. The slow section is very impressive and is constructed of broad phrases, presented naked of harmonic colouring and punctuated by two timpanists, one of whom is placed at the side of the orchestra. In the final movement the composer instructs the

two timpanists to maintain a menacing note, this foreshadowing his astonishing use of the side drum in the Fifth Symphony.

The War had left its mark on Nielsen who was deeply affected by the sight of so much slaughter, and his Fifth Symphony which was composed between 1920-22 reflected the turmoil in his mind. To reflect this anxiety he constructs this Fifth Symphony into two gigantic movements. The opening of this symphony is one of the most mysterious things in modern music. A continuous wavy line of soft violas, provides a neutral background upon which events are cast. The music continues on its tortuous way and then it is attacked and one of the most extraordinary passages ever written occurs. The side drum interrupts and the timpanist is directed by the composer to improvise "as if at all costs he wants to stop the progress of the orchestra." Finally the side drum is swallowed up in a crescendo, and the music dies away leaving an atmosphere not unlike a deserted battlefield. The second movement is a great outburst of sustained energy and contains two fugues, with a finale which makes one realise Nielsen's greatness, for it is intellectually and emotionally overwhelming. And in the words of Eric Blom of the "Observer" in 1950 "... if I had any urge to compose, or any gifts, this, living at the time I do, is the sort of music I should like to write."

At this point if Nielsen would have stopped writing, his symphonic development would have been in keeping with the great symphonists. Each symphony he wrote was in advance of the other and each utterly different from the other in the series. Here it would have seemed to be the logical apex of his work. Nevertheless with his Sixth Symphony he entered into a phase which was entirely dissimilar from his earlier work. It could be described as his descent from objectivity to subjectivity. The first movement is brilliant, and played by itself it could have been a complete work. The rest of the symphony does not measure up to the first movement, and is rather disjointed. Yet it is a moving document of a mind troubled and brooding, an example of his humanity and feeling for life. This mood left him, and in his last works which included two wind concertos and that great organ work "Commotio," he regained his composure and vision.

It is worth quoting what one great composer said about him, since it sums up what could not be said by any layman. Sibelius said, "Carl Nielsen was a born composer of symphonies, although his work embraced all forms of music. Through his great intelligence, he developed his genius in order to attain the aims which were—as I see it—clear to him from the beginning . . . one speaks of head and heart, Carl Nielsen had both in the highest degree. The principles he followed, such as the reaction against Romanticism, are actual at this moment (1953). Therefore his music exercises strong appeal in our day."

RON KAYE.

IN DEFENCE OF THE WHORE

"NO-ONE IS MORE BITTER in condemning the 'loose' woman than the 'good' woman, who has on occasions guiltily enjoyed a purple dream herself. It is never he who is without sin who casts the first stone." Henry Wechenafen—*The Urge to Punish*.

"Prostitution is the supreme type of vice and is ultimately the most efficient guardian of morals." W. E. H. Lecky—*History of Morals*.

The appointment of the Wolfenden Committee in 1955 started the most intensive examination of immoral sexual behaviour that this country has ever publicly witnessed. This golden opportunity for punditry and prejudice was gleefully seized by the bigats whilst the experts quivered lest the gaps in their knowledge should become too apparent under this close scrutiny. A large number of the more exhibitionist homosexuals gave evidence before the committee while the rest stayed at home and hoped, as it happened, in vain. However, not a single prostitute gave evidence before the tribunal which was to make pronouncements which would change the mode of life of practically every one of them.

It was said that the moral issue was not a consideration. The prostitute was to be considered in the same way as any other street hawker. The law was duly changed and because of the vicious penalties prostitution has been virtually driven from the streets. Because the law was changed justice has been done, and has been seen to be done, but what about right. It is this right of the prostitute to practise and ply her wares that I want to consider in terms of her own fulfillment and her essential function in society.

As a personality, the prostitute is basically lazy, feckless and completely unstable. The reasons for this are many and varied. Often she has an institution background, a domineering father or a lamentably inadequate mother. Sometime, at a very early age, she has been on the run from an approved school to which she had been sent for a petty offence. Alienated from legitimate society she finds a natural home with the criminal elements who eventually expect her to earn her own bread and butter and sometimes theirs as well. Often she just falls on hard times during a period of loneliness and is forced to find money quickly from the sale of her body. The multiplicity of roads on to "the game" all contain the single turning that comes when the first payment is made for services rendered. From this time forward she looks at men in general and her own body in a different light. Sexual contact becomes a steady commercial enterprise instead of the occasional barter transaction. Already she is predisposed by reason of environmental factors and psychopathic personality disorders towards a routineless and purposeless existence. Bereft of normal love and human relationships an answer to her uneasy dilemma in the form of a ready made institution suggests itself in an unequivocal fashion. Here is the opportunity to free herself from a social existence in the drudgery of set hours in a bottling factory, or a dingy

cafe which she is ill-equipped to deal with. Surely she has as much right to find her metier in this way as the most sophisticated drama student? who, for payment, doles out vicarious orgasms through "stage, screen and television." The difference is that the actress is cheaper and the salacious psyches of the slaving public which constitute her clients are in some ways more perverse than the flesh of the prostitute's customers.

It is interesting to note how the bulk of opposition to prostitution has emanated from the middle class bastions defending the nation's virtues. This, on the female side, has been put forward as a defence of womanhood against degradation by man. Could it not be that the underlying motive of these worthy ladies is sprung by concern to prohibit what may be a more satisfactory alternative for men. The emotionally poverty stricken nature of the middle class bedroom has often been geyed in literature and adequately verified clinically. It is little wonder they turn to breeding dogs and competing on horses.

The middle-class man largely confines his criticism to the ponce, "this disgraceful exploiter," and many even go so far as to suggest flogging as the only suitable punishment. Here we see a classical example of how frustration produces the most violent aggression. Whilst Parliament humanely rejected flogging in the recent Act it imposed a maximum penalty of seven years in prison for living on immoral earnings. Surely the reason for this is not to "keep the women from the streets" which was the avowed objective of recent legislation. It is suggested that it is the direct result of an upsurge of moral revulsion which in reality is a rationalised super-ego defence reaction against a mode of life which is intrinsically attractive. The culturally substantiated and genetically primitive pattern of masculine assertion is, and this is common to all groups, challenged by any conception of the woman as a provider. However, the intensive over-development of the culturally imposed super-ego, endemic in the persistently inhibitory nature of middle-class life, make subscription to societies' values an imperative at least in the overt sense. This means that the street-walker is beyond the pale in any sense to this group.

With the change in the general pattern of moral standards away from the Victorian towards the more rational libertarian, it is no longer necessary for the middle-class man to avoid taking the virginity of his friend's sister. An accommodating friend may even arrange to be out. The reverse of this situation has resulted, in the past, in the necessity of resorting to the working class prostitute in order to assuage his sexual thirst. If the necessity for commercial sex does arise he can resort to the middle class call girl whether his need be psychologically determined or that of mere deprivation. This institution did not exist to any extent in Victorian society and in any case is much more discreet than those which did. It will be seen, therefore, that the necessity for the call girl is obviated by a more attractive alternative.

Harking back to the despised ponce one finds, in fact, that the

organised racket and individual bully sending women out against their will does not exist to any significant degree of generality. He forms one of the only humanising elements in the life of an individual who is psychologically, socially and morally fitted to be one of society's isolates. With him she finds someone who needs her and takes a personal interest in her. He does not condemn her but encourages her in the only kind of occupation she can do well. Attempts at rehabilitation have shown how true this is. Perhaps even more important for the individual girl, however, is the fact that he is probably one of the few men she can find sexual satisfaction with who does not mind the indignity of sharing her with the rest of mankind. He protects her against troublesome customers and serves as her one and only status symbol in the competitive sub-culture in which she exists. She demonstrates her earning capacity by the car she buys him and the quality of the suit he wears. What right has society to deny her this?

The prostitute sees herself performing a definite role in society. She would maintain that she caters for a special group of customers who would contribute greatly to swelling the statistics concerning rape and sexual assault. In fact, she protects the "decent" woman. The fact that this contention holds some degree of truth is incontestable logically, the degree to which it happens is entirely another matter very much debatable. One thing is certain, however, and that is that some people would never get sexual gratification if prostitutes did not exist. Among these are the hale and the lame, the disfigured and isolate, and last of all, the "kinky." The former are often prohibited from forming satisfactory relationships with the opposite sex because of social instability stemming from their incapacities together with the inevitable concomitants of shyness and feelings of inferiority. The "kinky" however, is a different matter. He is the person whose gratifications come from being whipped, watching two women perform a perversion, having intercourse in special sorts of clothes and positions. He does not ask to be what he is. If he is married he perhaps hesitates to ask his wife to do those things which are the real source of his satisfaction. The results of this sort of frustration may not only be psychologically disastrous for the individual concerned but may well have physical consequences for some totally unsuspecting and unco-operating female. It is easy to see the role of the prostitute in this context.

Driving prostitutes from the streets has resulted in society being able to don blinkers shutting out the plight of the sexual isolate, the accomplishment of the complete refusal to see and admit that some women are unhappy and useless at doing anything except selling their bodies. The increase in penalties for street offences will firstly eliminate or greatly diminish that easy market place. Secondly, because of this, an increase of sexual misery will result, and lastly, because prostitutes have been driven from the streets and the market diminished this mode of life will be denied to many girls, who because of their social and psychological inadequacies will be unable

to seek fulfilment elsewhere. This consequent loss of total social happiness due to moral bigotry and fallacious reasoning is never worth the inner glow of hypocritical self-righteousness that these most recent measures have given. If society wants to attack the problem of the prostitute it should deal with those factors which have made her one. When, through failing to achieve complete success, it should leave the residue to meet its clients in comparative freedom so that these two unfortunate groups can subscribe to each other's happiness virtually fulfilling needs which society cannot.

I WALKED the path across the fields toward the sea,
Then the fields gave way to land so cold and barren.
Beside the track there stood the remnants of a tree,
Atop the trunk were three dead branches, pointing
mournfully to heaven.

I stopped and looked, and searched my soul to understand
Why this sight should cause my heart to weep,
For so it did : when from the one-time guardian of the land
There seemed to come a voice, one with authority, resonant
and deep.

It said : this tree once stood majestic, proud and strong,
Before the wickedness of man came to this place.
But the sin that man committed here was so detestable and
wrong
That nature vowed that here she would no more show her face.

I was that tree, and nature commanded I should die,
I and the land around me should perish for this sin.
So when the winter came and death was near, I lifted my
arms towards the sky,
And prayed to God, that my death should atone for the
atrocities of man.

But here now stands my skeleton,
Unnoticed by the world which passes down this track,
The busy world of unreflective people,
And none, save you, has ever wondered, none looked back . .

A. M. BENSON.

A SOCIALIST LOOKS AT DOCTOR ZHIVAGO

IT IS RARE INDEED that a work of art stimulates such controversy as has Boris Pasternak's novel. Since so much of the discussion has concerned the political inflection of the book one is more or less required to consider it in this light whether one is possessed of a prior committedness or not. There are, of course, a number of different levels on which one can evaluate the novel.

My immediate reaction, and I think that of many people, was one of sheer amazement at Pasternak's powers of perception. His impressionistic descriptions, both of Zhivago's sensitivity and of things external to, but within the zone of, Zhivago's emotions, are consistently full of power, vitality and, one feels, an indisputable integrity. On this, the "poetic" level, one can hardly criticise. It is when we consider it simply as a novel, and view it as an organic whole that faults appear. I place "faults" in parentheses because I do not subscribe to the view that novels should be suitably constructed to merit the title "great." Joyce's "Ulysses" constructed as a **novel** has not the merit of, say, a Jane Austen novel; but as a work of art I would, of course, consider it to be infinitely more magnificent. "Doctor Zhivago" is not a novel of subtle construction. The characters, other than Zhivago himself, exist as foils for his own development. One has the impression of a sharply drawn character in the foreground being shown up more and more sharply by the meanderings of figures of different shades in the background; and one always senses the complete identification of author with main character. Indeed I would go as far as to say there is only one real character in the book. The only possible exception to this is Lara who begins to emerge in the middle of the story as a personality of intricate construction; but after Zhivago tricks her into leaving him her only appearance again in the novel is one of total insignificance in which she seems out of character . . . at the death of Zhivago. Zhivago himself is our only medium of insight. If this were a novel in the tradition of either Tolstoy or Dostoevsky the book would lose its greatness because its importance depends on us considering Zhivago alone. This is illustrated by the pre-occupation one feels at one stage with Lara. In fact it is during this period when Zhivago is making frequent visits to Lara, leaving his wife Tonya in their hut in the country and has to share the "stage" with Zhivago that the latter appears to lose the strength of character that is so apparent in the early part of the novel, when he was more receptive to the events of the Revolution. His complete withdrawal from what he once appeared to consider wonderful new events coincides with this particular period of his relationship with Lara.

This leads us to consider in more detail the political implications of Doctor Zhivago's attitude. I think it is within the capabilities of everybody to appreciate Zhivago's despair and feeling of hopelessness for humanity during the Revolution. One can appreciate his often wishing to run from it all, but the point is that he never knows where

to run. Secondly, he shows no inclination to detect what is wrong with the philosophy he comes to despise. It is not true to say that Zhivago was a-political. I think he often wavered into the anti-revolutionary camp, although he was more consistently apathetic to the precise political implications of the Revolution; something which is often inconsistent with his sensitivity in more personal relationships. To call this the "great novel of the Revolution" is, I think, dangerous. It does not examine the Revolution in any way at all. However, it would be unfair to Mr. Pasternak to pursue the discussion in this direction, because we have no right to consider that is what he was getting at. But the apathy of Zhivago is relevant here because I think it induces the fading away of Zhivago at the end of the book. If one considers that Zhivago's *raison d'être* is to achieve artistic fulfilment, to completely discover himself, then one could never say he faded. But it is difficult to believe that Mr. Pasternak would have used such a vital backcloth to a novel merely to allow the only vital character to discover himself: although the poems which he wrote were not directly concerned with the events to which he was apathetic. Zhivago, did not, therefore, "need" the Revolution. This we can only assume from this reasoning that Pasternak intended Zhivago to be in a situation of involvement, in fact, that he wished to comment on the Revolution.

The fact that Zhivago does either become so confused by the revolutionary tendencies or become so disgusted with the events produces the judgement that there is a failing in the novel somewhere; for he never stops to evaluate the philosophy of the revolutionaries. To have arrived at a conclusion of anti-revolution he should, in view of his powers of artistic perception, have been able to see a little further than his immediate relationships into a universal content of human problems. This is not to say that he was not aware of human failings and the paradoxes produced by them: indeed he frequently commented on this very aspect of human nature, but he failed to fully appreciate, although obviously Mr. Pasternak himself knows, that the ruthlessness of the Revolution was the outcome of a complexity of philosophical stimulation, selfishness, and also love, among many other traits.

Thus one is faced with two irreconcilable reactions to the novel. On the credit side there is the poetic greatness of the novel in which we can also include the author's perceptiveness of personal dilemma as to immediate relationships. On the doubtful side we have the problem of Doctor Zhivago's apathy, and often antipathy, to the Revolution, which is sometimes born out of prejudice, more often from aloofness or disdain. But his disdain is not the disdain of Camus who said that "There is no destiny but what can be surmounted by disdain." For Camus, disdain was a method of application, whereas Zhivago's is one of withdrawal. Zhivago's disdain did not disfire him and make him "available to everything" (Camus). Rather, it shut him off, at least after his early excitement at Revolutionary change,

from the vital events of his time. He wished to return to his wife and his family and to the security of friends, a natural inclination, but not always a responsible one. Many people may well suggest that criticisms of Doctor Zhivago from an ideological standpoint are invalid, but I would suggest that they are relevant here because, firstly, the setting is against the single most important event, be it good or bad, in the history of Zhivago's country; secondly, the author often takes pains to comment on the Revolution, especially in the Epilogue in which a judgement is passed on it, and a very fair one, I think, which attempts to link the events in Russia with Doctor Zhivago's poetry. "They felt a peaceful joy for this holy city and for the whole land and for the survivors among those who had played a part in this story And it seemed that the book in their hands knew what they were feeling and gave them its support and confirmation."

It is easy to explain away the problem of the novel by saying that this is a story of a citizen of great creative talent striving to find himself and work out his personal salvation during a time of stress; and as such it depicts the groping efforts of millions of people all over the world to find "peace and happiness" for themselves and their children. This explanation is not satisfactory because Doctor Zhivago does at one stage show himself capable of absorbing, indeed delighting in, the implications of the Revolution, and secondly, Zhivago's sharply drawn personality fades towards his death, and one feels once he is dead that another man is dead; rather than being possessed with a sharply drawn indelible impression of a person of stature. In fact, after Zhivago's death Mr. Pasternak seems to be striving with more difficulty to link his hero to the Revolution.

It is very easy to see why this book caused such a commotion in Russia, because it fails to acknowledge in any way the dialectical materialism which is supposed to be the crux of Russian development and progress. As such it is a vital work of art: it is a sincere attempt to restore the badly upset balance between naked ideology and simple humanity. It is also possible that "Doctor Zhivago" is a reflection of the change that has come over everyday life in Russia since the death of Stalin. The mere fact that Pasternak continues to write in Russia today is an indication of this. It would nevertheless be foolish, I think, to overestimate the significance of the novel itself, although, as Edmund Wilson has pointed out, a very great deal of the poetry of the novel has lost its stature in the process of translation. Much of the symbolic significance of the novel is lost to Western readers; thus we do not, for instance, grasp without further reading Pasternak's relationships with Stalin, which Edmund Wilson says forms the basis for part of the novel.

ROLAND ROBERTSON.

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